



Operation Noble Eagle Continues

AT press time, more than 22,000 Army National Guard and Army Reserve soldiers had been called up and continue to provide security at airports and other facilities around the country.

The Department of Defense has launched "United in Memory," a special password-protected website for families of the people killed or wounded in the Sept. 11 terrorist attack on the Pentagon.

Operation Enduring Freedom

ON Jan. 4, a special forces sergeant was killed by hostile fire in Afghanistan and a Central Intelligence Agency officer was injured.

Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division replaced marines in Kandahar, Afghanistan. The Fort Campbell, Ky., soldiers' missions include maintaining a presence, operating the airfield, coordinating with the Afghan interim government, assisting humanitarian organizations and running the detention facilities.

Army Materiel Command provided Force Provider base camps to the Afghan theater of operations.

U.S. Army civil-affairs teams began working with international and nongovernmental organizations to increase humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan.

A 1,000-member task force of mainly military police from Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Campbell; Roosevelt Roads, P.R.; Camp Lejeune, N.C.; Norfolk, Va.; Dover Air Force Base, Del.; and Charleston Air Force Base, S.C., set up a detention camp at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

U.S. forces detained 434 Taliban and Al Qaeda members, 384 in the Afghanistan region and 50 at Guantanamo Bay, as of mid-January.

On Nov. 11, Third Army/Army Forces Central Command established Coalition Forces Land Component Command for Operation Enduring Freedom.

U.S. Army explosive ordnance disposal teams worked to clear the Mazar-e-Sharif airfield and surrounding area of mines to allow military and humanitarian assistance aircraft to use the airfield.

Soldiers in Afghanistan and surrounding areas that receive imminent danger pay or hostile fire pay are eligible for combat-zone tax exclusion.

This information was current as of Jan. 16, 2002, and was drawn from Army News Service and Department of Defense News releases, and from the American Forces Information Service.

Alexandria, Va.

MTMC to Improve Moves

CHANGES are coming in the way the Military Traffic Management Command administers soldiers' permanent-change-of-station moves.

"We are changing the processes that fundamentally affect how service members move," said LTC Patty Hunt, Army deputy chief of staff for passenger and personal prop-

erty. "These changes go to the core of the way we conduct business.

"These, combined with lessons learned from our pilot experience, will represent a major difference in the future program and the automation to support that program," she said.

Each year, MTMC moves more than 500,000 service members. The changes could be in place as early as spring — in time for the busy summer moving surge.

Changes will come in two

Training Update

Website Online For Anti-Terrorism Training

THE Web has replaced slides for Army personnel's annual anti-terrorism, force protection training.

The security website at www.at-awareness.org, helps soldiers and Army civilians meet their level-one anti-terrorism, force-protection training, which must also be taken before traveling overseas.

"The website was created to eliminate some of the work for antiterrorism officers so they can concentrate more on their primary mission," said Kris Cline, senior security specialist for the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations.

Not just anyone can log onto the site. It requires an access code that has to be issued by an installation's force protection officer.

The web-based training is a multiple-choice test that puts the individual in the middle of deadly scenarios, and gives immediate feedback when the person chooses the wrong answers.

The training begins with a statement explaining three ways on how not to be a target of terrorism, made by retired GEN Henry Shelton, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He said by keeping a low profile, being unpredictable and being vigilant, people can deter terrorist strikes. Shelton's advice in the beginning of the training session provides the information a person needs to make a number of right decisions while taking the 32-question test.

At the end of each scenario correct answers are reinforced, and a certificate is issued when the training is completed.

More changes to the website are being made. Family members will also be able to access the site within a year, Kline said.

Government personnel and their family members need to realize that force protection is not just the police or intelligence community's problem, Kline said. — *Army News Service*

broad areas — faster deliveries and higher qualification standards to move personal property.

MTMC is decreasing the time allowed for the delivery of service members' personal property in international moves, said Richard Morrow, a traffic-management specialist.

"This will represent changes — big and small — in the amount of time service members have to wait for their property to arrive at the next duty location."

For example, 66 days is the current time allowed to ship a service member's household goods from Fort Hood, Texas, to Kaiserslautern, Germany. The proposed changes would cut that time to 54 days.

In a related initiative, MTMC is increasing the standards required to qualify as a Department of Defense personal-property carrier. "Each carrier must reapply under the new standard to remain an approved DOD carrier," said

Sylvia Walker, a traffic management specialist.

The revised standards call for carriers to meet higher financial reporting and operating standards, including increased cargo liability insurance and maintenance of a performance bond for domestic moves. — *MTMC Public Affairs Office*

San Antonio, Texas

Army Sponsors All American Bowl

SEVENTY-FOUR of the nation's top high school football players descended on San Antonio recently and learned about the Army along the way.

These players were in town to play in the U.S. Army All American Bowl that featured 74 All-American players from around the country playing an East-versus-West all-star game.

For the Army, this game was about much more than a day of football, according to MG Dennis D. Cavin, commander of U.S. Army Recruiting Command. It was about a commitment to the youth of America, he said.

"The perception that these young people have is that the Army is a group of people who 'are not like me,'" said Cavin.

"That perception is all wrong. We have to change that through outreach and demonstrating how the Army works."

Part of that exposure came in the form of real soldiers doing real jobs, brought to the game to talk to prospective recruits.

Before the game the Army traveled to more than 20 cities to name players to the teams and to present them with jerseys. In addition to the media opportunity that this provided, it added something else — a chance to expose America's youth to today's Army.

"This is an awareness campaign, part of the Army's outreach program to show America who the Army is and what we are about," said Cavin.

"America's Army takes youth from all walks of life, and after a couple of years the Army will return a better citizen with a skill and a sense of purpose," said Cavin.

In the end the score of the game didn't matter. What mattered was that everyone involved came out a winner, the players and the Army, Cavin said.

"The Army is a winner," said Cavin, "because we have exposed 74 future leaders to what the Army is really all about." — *ARNEWS*

Assignment News

Website Lets Soldiers ASK For Assignment Options

A WEB-based program now gives enlisted soldiers a say in choosing their next duty assignments.

The Assignment Satisfaction Key, or ASK, Internet tool will provide soldiers, for the first time, the capability to post assignment preference information directly onto the Total Army Personnel Database.

In the old "Dream Sheet" days, soldiers could choose from 230 continental United States locations and 280 overseas locations, said COL Jeffrey Redmann, deputy director of Enlisted Personnel Management.

"In reality, soldiers had little chance of being assigned to many of these locations," he said.

ASK will require soldiers to select three CONUS locations and three other preferences outside the continental United States.

Preference locations are those in which a soldier would prefer to be assigned, said MSG Thomas Gills, a branch manager at Total Army Personnel Command.

The first two preference choices will be from the Army's 10 divisions, because that's where soldiers are needed most, Gills said. The other choice will be from an expanded listing which includes the divisional installations plus other CONUS installations.

Soldiers may also select three CONUS and three OCONUS volunteer locations. Gills said volunteer locations are those a soldier would want to go to if asked to move immediately.

Soldiers who don't submit preferences will be sent to duty stations based on the needs of the Army, Gills said. Soldiers also have to understand that they will not always be put in a position because they want to go there and it's open, Gills said.

ASK is available to soldiers through PERSCOM's website at www.perscom.army.mil. Soldiers will need to use their Army Knowledge Online account passwords to gain access to their information. — *ARNEWS*



Soldiers were on hand to talk with spectators at the recent U.S. Army All American Bowl in San Antonio.

WAR ON TERRORISM UPDATE



David L. Barrett

Alexandria, Va.

Army Actors Seek Audiences

THE soldier cast and crew of "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)" have taken their show to the lower 48 states, Alaska, the Pacific and the Far East. Their final performance will take place in April.

Three soldiers — a chemical engineer, a mechanic and a field-artillery surveyor — perform all 37 of the bard's works as audiences likely have never seen them before. And they do it in 90 minutes.

"Theater BRAVO!, as the troupe is named, provides entertainment by the soldier for the soldier," said Tim Higdon, Army Entertainment Division producer. The tradition of soldier entertainment originated with SGT Irving Berlin in World War I.

This Army Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Entertainment Division production of Shakespeare's works, directed by British free-lance director Paul Bourne, is an English professor's nightmare. Three male actors play various Shakespearean roles of both sexes in a madcap, energetic comedy.

Higdon said BRAVO! is performing Shakespeare because everybody's heard of him and the soldiers perform the play in a way everyone can relate to.

"Audiences don't have to understand the Shakespearean language, because we don't necessarily use it the whole time," said Higdon.

Imagine "Othello" done in rap, "Henry V" in a football-game setting or "Romeo and Juliet" as a slapstick bit, he said. Even dinosaurs make an ap-

pearance in this play.

The actors — SPC Travis DelMatto, PFC Jason King and PFC Derek Shannon — are supported by two technicians, SGT Thomas Labeth and PFC Jarrod Lancaster, who change the scenery, run the lights and sound, help the actors with their costumes, and make sure the dinosaurs don't roam out into the audience.

For information on future MWR presentations, visit www.armyentertainment.com. — *Community and Family Support Center PAO*

Alexandria, Va.

Uniform Changes Coming

MORE than 10 changes in the Army's uniform policy are currently being staffed for an update of Army Regulation 670-1.

Items being revised include hair, nails, contact lenses, cell phones, pagers, bloused boots, headgear, "camelbacks," regimental distinctive insignia, and physical fitness uniform wear and pregnancy clothing, said MSG Kittie Messman, the uni-

form policy noncommissioned officer in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel.

Until the revised regulation is signed by the secretary of the Army, the 1992 version of the regulation is still in effect.

Under the upcoming regu-

lation only one electronic device will be authorized for wear on the uniform in the performance of official duties. The device may be either a cell phone or pager — not both.

Messman is the principal advisor for changes to the uni-

form policy, but she said the changes that are being staffed came from recommendations.

"We depend a lot on leaders in the field," Messman said. "They know the young soldiers of today. I get their input on when it's time to allow something that wasn't allowed before, or when something starts becoming a distraction and needs to be addressed."

People usually have the hardest time accepting the grooming policies, Messman said. "We don't want to rob people of their individuality," she said. "But the Army has never professed to be a leader in fashion. Our goal is to create a conservative, professional image, and some of the more trendy styles will not accomplish that goal."

Highlights of the changes include:

■ Dreadlocks are prohibited for all soldiers. Prohibited hair dye colors include purple, blue, pink, green, orange, bright fire-engine red and neon colors.

■ Applied colors must look natural on the individual soldier. Women are authorized to wear braids and cornrows; baldness is authorized for males,

either natural or shaved.

■ Males are not authorized to wear nail polish, and they must keep nails trimmed to the tip of the finger. Females must keep nails trimmed no longer than 1/4 inch, as measured from the fingertip. Two-tone or multi-tone manicures and nail designs are prohibited. Prohibited nail polish colors include the same colors as for hair.

■ Commanders may authorize the use of a camouflage hydration system ("camelbacks") for field duty or on work details. Soldiers will not use these devices in a garrison environment, unless directed by the commander.

■ Sew-on insignia are now authorized for the desert BDUs; colors are khaki and spice-brown combinations.

■ Pregnant soldiers should wear the PT uniform until it becomes too small or too uncomfortable. At that time, pregnant soldiers may wear civilian equivalent workout attire. Leaders will not require soldiers to purchase larger PT uniforms to accommodate the pregnancy.

For details visit www.odcsp.army.mil/directorates/hr/pr/uniform.asp. — ARNEWS



Nail polish is prohibited for male soldiers, and females may not wear fire-engine red, two-tone or multi-tone designs.

Veterans News

Home Loan Ceiling Raised; Reserve Loan Authority Extended

AN act recently passed by Congress and signed by President George W. Bush increases the guarantee on Department of Veterans Affairs home loans from \$50,750 to \$60,000.

The increase means eligible veterans can use their loan benefits to purchase homes costing as much as \$240,000 without a down payment. Many lenders will make VA no-down-payment loans for four times the maximum guarantee amount, said Judy Caden, deputy director of VA's Loan Guaranty Service.

The act also changed the Native American veterans housing loan program, assistance for specially adapted housing and home loans for National Guardsmen and Reservists.

VA's direct-loan program for American Indians assists those vets buying on trust land, she noted. VA issues the loan, not a private lender, so the program's different from regular government home loans.

The act extends the nine-year-old program for four years, to Dec. 31, 2005. The program's loan ceiling is \$80,000, except in certain high-cost areas where VA has approved up to \$120,000, she said. Loan interest rates are competitive with the mortgage market, she added.

The act also increases specialty housing grants from \$43,000 to \$48,000 for severely disabled veterans who need homes built to accommodate wheelchairs. The grant pays for such things as wider hallways, lowered kitchen appliances and counter tops, and bigger bathrooms, Caden said. Veterans can use both grants and regular VA guaranteed loans to cover the total costs of their home purchases, she said.

Another grant program for housing adaptations for less seriously disabled vets had its ceiling raised to \$9,250 — up from \$8,250, she pointed out. "The money is for some blind veterans and amputees who need extra help," she said.

The new law also extends housing loans for National Guard and Reserve personnel from September 2007 to Sept. 30, 2009. Reserve-component personnel are authorized the same home loan guarantees as active-duty personnel. — *American Forces Press Service*

Travel News

Frequent-Flier Miles Can Now Be Kept

THE 2002 Defense Authorization Act now allows official travelers to accept promotional items, including frequent-flier miles, and use them for personal travel.

According to the new law, "any promotional items through official travel belong to the traveler," said Dwight Moore, staff attorney at U.S. Transportation Command and a principle writer of the proposal. He said TRANSCOM recommended the change to Congress.

Mileage received by service members and federal employees before the bill was passed is also "grandfathered," Moore said. People who have accumulated mileage in frequent-flier accounts through official travel over the past years own all of that mileage, he said.

Moore explained that frequent-traveler benefits include points or miles, upgrades, or access to carrier clubs or facilities.

The change in the law was the result of a legislative proposal forwarded by TRANSCOM in 1999 as part of its yearly package of proposals for consideration by the Department of Defense and Congress, Moore said.

The proposal went to all federal agencies for coordination and comment, and eventually was sponsored by legislators.

One stipulation in the law is that government travelers cannot accept special promotional items that are not available to the general public.

"The promotional material must be obtained under the same terms as those offered to the general public and must be at no additional government cost," according to implementing instructions from the Per Diem, Travel And Transportation Allowance Committee, a DOD activity.

Local travel offices can provide more information on the new law, Moore said. — *TRANSCOM News Service*